

# TESTING OUT – March 2005

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. Have there been any changes to Section 1279b on “Testing Out?”

**No.** The language remains the same as it was under Public Act 335 of 1993. The law provides that a board may grant credit to a student who “tests out” of a course.

2. When a student requests the option to test out, when should it take place?

**ASAP.** As soon as possible, ten days has been agreed to be ample time to make the final exam accessible and an assessment of mastery should be made so the student can move ahead with more advanced work.

3. If a district does not have a comprehensive exam (Final), do they have to create one to be available for students to “test out” of a course?

**No.** The district must provide a comprehensive exam or other criteria established by the local board, such as portfolios, performances, papers, projects, and laboratory experiences.

4. Are there courses that students may not “test out” of?

**Yes.** Students are required by State law to successfully complete a one-semester course in civics to receive a diploma.

5. Is “testing out” restricted to a specific grade level?

**No.** Any high school student may “test out” of any course except civics; it’s required by State law.

6. What about honors classes, which are not required of all students?

**Yes.** If a course is offered, the option for “testing out” must be made available to students.

7. May districts assess a fee to cover the extra costs incurred by administering comprehensive exams/exhibitions or knowledge of course content?

**No.** The option to “test out” of courses must be made available to students without extra costs incurred by the student. It is not legal to assess a fee for exercising this option.

8. If the student has a first language other than English, which is not offered by the district as a course, may he/she “test out” under Section 1279e using their first language to demonstrate proficiency?

**Yes.** If they demonstrate proficiency, they are also eligible to receive high school credit.

9. May the district determine which courses students may “test out” of?

**No.** Districts may not pick and choose the courses for which students may “test out.” If a course is offered, the option must be made available. Similarly, districts may not choose to offer the “testing out” option to some students and not to others.

10. Should the district provide students wishing to “test out” of a course with textbooks, reading lists, outlines and course materials?

**No.** Students should be afforded access to curriculum description that may include the syllabus, course outline, course objective and expected outcomes if they are available.

11. May students test out of courses in which they earned a failing grade?

**No.** A district may restrict the testing out option to students who have not passed the course.